

2. This College is one of the Colleges which has not been paying salaries regularly to its employees. Payment of salary is essentially a matter between the employer (the College) and its employees. Government is not responsible for payment of salaries to the Aided College employees. However, in order to see that the grant-in-aid paid to a College is utilised for the purposes of payment of salaries, the Department of Collegiate Education has introduced a scheme whereby it opens an account in a Bank at the place of the College where the grant to be paid to the college is credited. The College concerned has also to credit its share to this account. The employees are asked to open accounts in the same Bank. The Bank after receiving clearance from the Department credits the salary of each teacher to his account. The On Account Grant to be released to this College will be governed by this scheme. The exact information about the number of months for which salary has not been paid in this case is being ascertained.

(iii) *Re : Death of 13 persons due to burst of Transformers at Hotel Ashoka, Bangalore.*

SRI AMIR RAHAMATHULLA KHAN (Basavanagudi).—Madam, I call the attention of the Minister of State for Information and Power to the death of 13 persons due to the burst of the transformers at Hotel Ashoka, Bangalore.

SRI B. SUBBAYYA SHETTY (Minister for State for Information and Power).—Madam Speaker, in response to the Calling Notice of the hon. Member Sriyutha Rahamathulla Khan and K.R. Srinivasulu Nayudu, I wish to make the following statement.

My attention has been called to the burst of Transformer at Ashoka Hotel, Bangalore resulting in loss of human lives and loss of property on 8th March 1977.

I would like to bring the following facts connected with the case to the notice of the House.

On 8th March 1977 at about 11-30 hours in the morning, a complaint was received in the service station of Karnataka Electricity Board near Anandrao Circle that there was power failure in the Ashoka Hotel. Two Supervisors of Karnataka Electricity Board accompanied by two linemen went to attend to the complaint. When they reached the High Tension Switchgear room in the premises of the Ashoka Hotel, the Electrical Engineering staff of the Ashoka Hotel were already inside the switchgear room. After the switch fuse Unit (V, L. Unit) was inspected by the Karnataka Electricity Board Supervisors and as the fuses were intact, the switch was closed

when a big explosion is stated to have occurred. With the explosion of the fuse unit with extensive arcing, the oil inside the unit flashed out in flames. At the time of the bursting of the switch fuse unit, the following 16 persons were inside the switchgear room ;

Sriyuths :

1. B. S. Raju, Executive Engineer (Elect). Ashoka Hotel.
2. M. T. Reddy, Assistant Engineer, Ashoka Hotel.
3. K. L. Ramachandra, Assistant, Ashoka Hotel.
4. C. Rangachari, Senior Technical Assistant, Ashoka Hotel.
5. Chandrappa, Jawali, Air Condition Plant Mechanic, Ashoka Hotel.
6. Anthony Raj, Electrician, Ashoka Hotel.
7. Annaiappa, Electrician, Ashoka Hotel.
8. Ramachandra, Helper, Ashoka Hotel.
9. H. Jayarama Gowda, Supervisor, Karnataka Electricity Board.
10. M. Krishnamurthy, Supervisor, Karnataka Electricity Board.
11. Lawrence Ambrogoose, Lineman, Karnataka Electricity Board.
12. Yalakkaiah, Lineman, Karnataka Electricity Board.
13. Tulasirama Prasad, Auto Mechanic, Karnataka Electricity Board.
14. Sri Ramakrishna, Junior Assistant, Karnataka Electricity Board.
15. Boregowda, Junior Assistant, Karnataka Electricity Board.
16. Bettaswamy, Junior Assistant, Karnataka Electricity Board.

The fire that was created at the time of explosion trapped all the persons who were inside. The entire room was filled with thick smoke. The persons inside whose clothing had caught fire heavily, could not run out of the room, due to scare and confusion and also due to the fact that the door was very narrow being only $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. Before these people could run out of the room, their bodies had been subjected to severe burns. 16 people managed to come out of the switchgear room and thereafter each one of them either rolled on the ground by himself or was assisted by some of the employees of

the Hotel to put off the fire. Thereafter, they were removed to the Bowring Hospital and Victoria Hospital by available transport as quickly as possible by the Ashoka Hotel authorities.

Of the 16 persons, 2 persons died on the same day and 4 other persons died on 9th March 1977. As on to-day only 2 persons out of the 16 are still surviving. They are Sri Anthony Raj, Electrician of Ashoka Hotel and Sri Yalakkaiah, Lineman, Karnataka Electricity Board. One Executive Engineer, One Assistant Engineer and one Senior Technical Assistant of Ashoka Hotel and two supervisors of Karnataka Electricity Board are among the dead. One Assistant of Ashoka Hotel and three Junior Assistants of the Karnataka Electricity Board are also among the dead. I might mention that the presence of these persons in the Cabin was unauthorised.

The Karnataka Electricity Board authorities have already made *ex-gratia* payment of Rs. 1,000 to each of the relatives of the deceased and Rs. 500 to each of the injured. In addition, they have also sanctioned a further sum of Rs. 7,000 as *ex-gratia* to relatives of the deceased Karnataka Electricity Board employees.

In addition to the above *ex-gratia* payment, the Board will extend help to the bereaved families with offer of appointment to the nearest dependent family members of the deceased Karnataka Electricity Board workmen. It is learnt that Ashoka Hotel authorities have also made similar payments.

Government have appointed the Electrical Inspector to Government of Karnataka to hold an inquiry into the cause of accident under Section 33(2) of the Indian Electricity Act and submit a report. The public inquiry has been fixed by him to commence from 14th of April 1977. A public notice has already been issued by him inviting all persons acquainted with the matter under this inquiry to furnish statements relating to the matter under inquiry.

The report appearing the Samyuktha Karnataka about the death of one Engineer relates to one Sri M. T. Reddy, Assistant Engineer (Elect.), of Ashoka Hotel who died on 29-3-1977 in Victoria Hospital. He was one among the 8 persons of Ashoka Hotel injured in the blast.

SRI RAHAMATHULLA KHAN.—When was this transformer installed?

SRI B. SUBBAIAH SHETTY.—I am not able to give answer to that Question. I require notice.

ಶ್ರೀ ಕೆ. ಆರ್. ಶ್ರೀನಿವಾಸಲೂ ನಾಯ್ಕ.—ತಮ್ಮ ಉತ್ತರವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿದಾಗ ಒಳ್ಳೆಯ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದೀರಿ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆಲವು ಸಂದೇಹ ಮೂಡುವಂಥ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇದು ವಿವರಣೆಗಳನ್ನೊಳಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಅಶೋಕ ಹೋಟೆಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದಂಥ ಘಟನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ೧೬ ಜನರೂ ಸತ್ತಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ, ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ೮

ಜನರು ಖಾಸಗಿಯವರು ಉಳಿದೆಲ್ಲ ಜನರು ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಾಗಿರುತ್ತಾರೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿರುತ್ತೀರಿ, ಇವರಲ್ಲಿ ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ಕ್ವಾಲಿಫೈಡ್ ಹ್ಯಾಂಡ್ಸ್ ಇರುತ್ತಾರೆ, ಯಾರೂ ರಾ ಹ್ಯಾಂಡ್ಸ್ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದೂ ಕೂಡ ಹೇಳಿರುತ್ತೀರಿ. ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ಕಡೆ ಅನ್ ಅಥರೈಸ್ಡ್ ಪರ್ಸನ್ಸ್ ಎಂದೂ ಕೂಡ ಹೇಳಿರುತ್ತೀರಿ. ಇಷ್ಟೊಂದು ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿ ವರ್ಗದವರು ಮರಣ ಹೊಂದಲೂ ಸಬ್‌ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಟೀವ್ ಮೆಟೀರಿಯಲ್ಸ್ ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸದಿದ್ದು ದೇ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಡಿಪಾರ್ಟ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಅನ್‌ಕ್ವಯರಿ ಕಮಿಟಿಯವರದು ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯ ವಿವರಣೆಯಾದರೆ, ಪ್ರೋಲೀಸಿನವರದು ಒಂದು ರೀತಿಯ ವಿವರಣೆಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಇತಿಹಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಇಂಥ ಘಟನೆ ನಡೆದಿರುವುದು ಇದೇ ನೊಂದಲಬಾರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ದಯವಿಟ್ಟು ಇದನ್ನೂ ಕೂಲಂಕುಷವಾಗಿ ವಿವರಣೆ ಪಡೆದು ತತ್ಕ್ಷಣ ಪರಿಹಾರಿಸಿಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇನೆ. ಏತಕ್ಕೊಂದರೆ ನೂರು ಇನ್ನೂರು ಜನ ಅವಲಂಬಿತರು ಮಾಡಿದಂಥವರ ಕುಟುಂಬದಲ್ಲಿ ಇರುತ್ತಾರೆ. ನೀವು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಪರಿಹಾರ ಬಹಳ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದುದರಿಂದ ಇದರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಒಂದು ಎನ್‌ಕ್ವಯರಿ ಕಮಿಟಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದು ಕೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇನೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಬಿ. ಸುಬ್ಬಯ್ಯಶೆಟ್ಟಿ.—ಕಾನೂನು ಪ್ರಕಾರವಾಗಿ ಎನ್‌ಕ್ವಯರಿ ಕಮಿಟಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಇ.ಬಿ ಯವರ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ ಇದು ಒಂದು ಅಟಾನಮಸ್ ಬಾಡಿಯಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ತಾವು ಹೇಳಿದ ಹಾಗೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಎಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಿಕಲ್ ಇನ್‌ಸ್ಟ್ರಕ್ಷನ್‌ರವರು ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ನೋಟೀಸ್ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಸೆಕ್ಷನ್ 52ನೇ ರೂಲ್ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಎನ್‌ಕ್ವಯರಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ ಇದ್ದಾರೆ. ಏತಕ್ಕೆ ಹೀಗಾಯಿತು, ಹೀಗಾಗಲು ಕಾರಣವೇನು ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನೆಲ್ಲ ಕೂಲಂಕಿತವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆಮಾಡಿ ರಿಪೋರ್ಟ್‌ನ್ನು ಕೊಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಅನಂತರ ಸತ್ಯ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಇನ್ನೂ ಯಾರು ಈ ಯಂತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಅವರ ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಂದರೆ ಅವರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲವರು ಡ್ರೈವರ್‌ಗಳು ಇದ್ದರು, ಅವರು ಒಳಗಡೆ ಹೋಗಬೇಕಾದ ಅವಶ್ಯಕತೆ ಇರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದರೂ ಅವರು ಹೋಗಿದ್ದರು. ಅವರಿಗೂ ಕೂಡ ಎಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ಕೊಟ್ಟಂತೆ ಹಣವನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಎಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಿಸಿಟಿ ಬೋರ್ಡಿನವರು ಒದಗಿಸಿಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.

Leave of Absence to Sri M. H. Boraiah

Grant of

MADAM SPEAKER.—I have received a letter from Sri M. H. Boraiah, Member, Legislative Assembly requesting for leave of absence from the current Session due to ill health.

Is it the pleasure of the House to grant permission to the Hon'ble Member to remain absent from the sittings of the House during the current Session?

HON'BLE MEMBERS.—Yes.

MADAM SPEAKER.—The permission to remain absent is granted.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

SRI H. SIDDAVEERAPPA.—Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Minister for Municipal Administration and Political Pensions, I beg to lay on the Table.—

Notification No. S O. 816 dated 5th April 1977 Corrigendum to Notification No. HMA 79 TMO 76 dated 22nd March 1977. Under sub-section (5) of Section 316 of the Karnataka Municipalities Act, 1964.

MADAM SPEAKER.—The Paper is laid.